Prices and Wages

434 Detailed information on food rations in Byelorussia is not available, but they are believed to be similar to those in the Ukrainian S.S.R.[1]

435 Prices are controlled by the government and price levels vary with the type of market outlet rather than with the type of commodity. 449 In the government ration stores prices are low. In all the main cities, however, there are also one or two special stores, so called "gastronomes", (which are also government operated); these sell unrationed goods at relatively high prices. Their stock consists in large part of luxury items (such as smoked salmon) but some of their commodities are the same as or comparable to those sold in the ration stores. Individuals may therefore supplement their rations of various commodities by purchases at the gastronomes if they are able and willing to pay the price. While the ration stores sold UNRRA food,[2] the entire stock of the gastronomes comes from Byelorussian or Soviet Union sources.

In addition to these stores, and to the special stores serving factory workers and those supplying extra rations at low prices to war invalids and expectant and nursing mothers, there are public markets in the principal cities. Here country people come to sell the allowed quota of their produce and second-hand goods are bought and sold. Prices resemble those in the gastronomes.

435 The difference in prices between the ration stores and the gastronomes in the summer of 1946 is illustrated in the following table.

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1 See Operational Analysis Paper No. 39, Economic Rehabilitation in the Ukraine.

2 In the late spring and summer of 1946 the foodstuffs (with the exception of bread and potatoes) sold in these shops was to a very great extent of UNRRA origin. Some estimates gave the UNRRA contribution as 70 per cent. of the turnover, but this figure has not been confirmed by the Byelorussian Government. Later the UNRRA percentage gradually decreased as the supply from Soviet sources increased.